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7 December 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
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Indonesia: The dispute between Sukarno and the army has been sharpened by the President's recent statements.

Yesterday in his second speech in three days, Sukarno complained to the People's Provisional Assembly that anti-Communist elements were attempting to force his hand and were seeking to bypass him in dealing with the problems of the country. Admitting that he had neglected Indonesian economic development, the President challenged unnamed "deviators of the revolution" either to depose him or to give him free rein in running the country.

Members of the ineffectual assembly, who include representatives of all the legal political parties, may now feel they must respond to this emotional appeal with some expression of support. However, the US Embassy believes Sukarno's opponents probably will benefit ultimately from his open admission that he has been weakened and that he is not being fully consulted in the decision-making process.

Army leaders largely ignored a spate of presidential criticism early last month, and are not likely to retreat quickly in the face of the present barrage. They apparently believe that the threat of PKI insurgency has now been contained and are increasingly turning their attention to economic matters.

Although they think that Sukarno and his clique are most vulnerable in this area, they are evidently treading cautiously in the hope of avoiding any measures which would relieve the pressure on Sukarno or redound to the President's credit.

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Greece: The shaky Stephanopoulos government is becoming increasingly concerned about the Greek economy.

The government's balance of payments and budgetary problems have gradually increased since last summer's extended political crisis. In the past few weeks, public confidence in the economy has declined rapidly. Private gold purchases have risen by several thousand percent, and savings deposits have dropped sharply.

Stephanopoulos has been contemplating rigorous tax increases and restrictions on expenditures. He doubts that the measures can obtain parliamentary approval without a simultaneous demonstration of US support. [To emphasize the seriousness of the situation, the government has had the King write to President Johnson requesting a loan.]

Should the economic situation continue to deteriorate or Stephanopoulos' economic proposals be defeated, the coalition government, which has a parliamentary margin of no more than two votes, might quickly fall. Its collapse would again create a parliamentary impasse and revive the threats of dictatorship which prevailed most of last summer, and would further aggravate the economic situation. The King refuses to permit elections at this time for fear that former prime minister Papandreou would come back to power.

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USSR: Steps taken at an unheralded meeting yesterday of the Soviet Party Central Committee may mean a political setback for Aleksandr Shelepin, rumored last summer to be a contender for Brezhnev's position as party chief.

The Central Committee replaced the joint Party-State Control Committee headed by Shelepin with "Organs of Peoples' Control" which will have no authority in the party sphere. Preliminary reporting on the plenum makes no mention of Shelepin and it is not known if he will remain at the head of a downgraded organization. Further indication of his present standing should emerge from the Supreme Soviet session which opens today.

In other actions, the plenum approved the draft 1966 plan and budget which are to be presented to the Supreme Soviet and made two high-level personnel appointments. It is unusual for a plenum of the Central Committee to act on yearly plans and budgets. Although it did no more than endorse in general a mid-November joint decision of the ruling party presidium and the Council of Ministers approving the plan and budget, the plenum action may be an attempt to stress further the party's guiding role in the planning and budgeting process.

The reinstatement of Vladimir Shcherbitsky as a candidate member of the party presidium has been expected since October of this year when he was brought back as Ukrainian premier. Shcherbitsky, who was relieved of both positions by Khrushchev in 1963, is reportedly close to Brezhnev.

Ivan Kapitonov, named to the party secretariat, appears to be a belated replacement of Vitaly Titov, who was transferred out of Moscow last April. Titov had been Khrushchev's party personnel chief. Kapitonov has been doing similar work for the past year.

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Colombia: [Ambassador Oliver in Bogota suspects that a group of "Young Turks" in the Foreign Ministry may be instigating a movement against cooperation with the US in international meetings.]

[At the OAS conference in Rio de Janeiro late in November, the Colombian delegation tried to introduce a resolution condemning unilateral intervention, an implicit attack on US activities in the Dominican Republic. Along the same line, the Colombian ambassador to the OAS demonstrated considerable obstructionism during the OAS debates at the height of the Dominican crisis last May.]

[When approached by Ambassador Oliver on 25 November, President Valencia readily offered to order the delegation at the Rio meeting to "moderate its insistence." Oliver suspects a clique in the Foreign Ministry may be acting independently of the President and the foreign minister.]

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NOTES

Thailand: (The Thai Government is establishing a new unified command headquarters in the northeast in response to increased Communist activity there in recent months. The command, directly responsible to Prime Minister Thanom, will include army, police, and civilian personnel in order to improve coordination of counterinsurgency activities. Initial plans indicate that emphasis will continue to be placed on police and civic action programs.)

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